UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/PRST/1994/60
21 October 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3441st meeting of the Security council, held on 21 October 1994, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the situation in Burundi, on the basis of the Secretary-General's report (S/1994/1152). It recalls its earlier statements on this subject, most recently that made by the President of the Council on 25 August 1994 (S/PRST/1994/47). It warmly welcomes the election and swearing in of the President, the confirmation in office of the Prime Minister, and the formation of the new coalition Government. It believes that this represents an important step forward in the stabilization of the situation in Burundi. It calls upon all parties in Burundi to cooperate in the work of re-establishing democracy and stability.

"The Security Council remains concerned that, despite the important political progress that has been made, much remains to be done if the climate of insecurity described by the Secretary-General in his report is to be dispelled and the country set firmly on the path of reconciliation and reconstruction. The Council deplores the fact that extremist elements continue to threaten national reconciliation, including through the operation of a clandestine radio station inciting ethnic hatred and violence. It reaffirms the importance of bringing to justice those responsible for the coup of 21 October 1993 and subsequent inter-ethnic massacres and other violations of international humanitarian law. In this regard, it also encourages the Secretary-General to pursue his suggestion that United Nations assistance be provided to the Government of Burundi in strengthening its judicial system.

"The Security Council commends the role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, including in helping the new coalition Government to organize a national debate early in 1995 on the problems of relations between the two communities. The Council attaches importance to the success of this initiative. In this regard, it welcomes the Secretary-General's intention to strengthen the office of the Special Representative.

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"The Security Council believes the international community must continue to give priority to the restoration of stability and the promotion of national reconciliation in Burundi. In this context, it recognizes the work of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the office he has established in Burundi, and notes the important role human rights monitors might play. It welcomes the recent increase in the number of Organization of African Unity (OAU) military observers in Burundi. It encourages the OAU, United Nations agencies and Member States to continue their involvement in Burundi and to intensify political contacts and visits. It notes the importance of increased technical assistance from the international community as the coalition Government tackles the critical tasks of reconciliation and reconstruction.

"The Council remains deeply concerned at the plight of refugees and displaced persons in Burundi. It commends the continuing efforts of the High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian bodies to address this problem. It welcomes the Secretary-General's sending of a Special Envoy to study the refugee crisis from a regional perspective and looks forward to any recommendations that the Secretary-General may have as a result of that initiative.

"The Council calls on the authorities and all parties in Burundi to ensure the safety and security of all personnel involved in the relief efforts and other international personnel.

"In the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 14 October (S/PRST/1994/59) on the situation in Rwanda, the Council encouraged the Secretary-General to pursue consultations as to how the United Nations can assist in the preparation and convening of an international conference to look into the problems of the subregion. The Council believes that the holding of such a conference would be of real value in the context of Burundi.

"The Security Council stands ready to consider further any detailed proposals which the Secretary-General may have. The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter."